



## **Councillor Christopher Pearson**

### **Executive Member for Housing, Health, & Culture**

#### **September 2020**

We commenced the new collection service as planned the first week in April and experienced an unprecedented increase in household waste arisings due primarily to the lockdown restrictions which included the closure of all HWRC's. Total waste arisings increased by almost 1,500 tonnes or 150 refuse vehicle loads of waste in the first quarter when compared with the same period last year. Whilst all waste collection streams increased the largest increase in percentage terms was for the new recycling service which reflected the consultation feedback that customers would recycle more material if they had wheeled bins. During quarter two the recycling tonnages are remaining high whilst residual waste tonnages are returning back to more normal levels which if maintained for the rest of the year will have a positive impact on recycling rates.

Under normal circumstances the mobilisation of the new service went very smoothly but when you consider we started the service under a pandemic lockdown and social distancing it is fair to say that it has gone exceptionally well and all officers and Amey staff have gone the extra mile to ensure a quality service is delivered.

The numbers of missed collections have been monitored during the mobilisation and by June they were back at a similar level to last year which is about 80 for the month across all waste services including green waste. It is expected they will reduce further as the service beds in.

The first new waste collection vehicles are due to arrive at the end of this month and final delivery is expected in November.

#### **Visitor Economy**

- The first Visitor Economy Advisory Board (VEAB) meeting is set for Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September, where the Terms of Reference will be agreed. Nine representatives from the sector, from across the District, have confirmed attendance including: The Drover's Arms/The Castle Inn, Stillingfleet Lodge Gardens, The Escapologist, Selby Abbey, Drax, Dovecote Barns, Yorkshire Paintball Centre, Towton Battlefield Society.
- LazenbyBrown have been appointed to create Visitor Destination branding for the District and to develop a full marketing plan. There will be a series of branding workshops in Sept/Oct for stakeholders and the VEAB will take a lead in shaping the output of this work.

- Selby Abbey is open to visitors and, with early support from the Tourism Development Officer, has been working to train volunteers as tour guides. The first tour will go live as soon as it is safe for them to do. The Abbey was successful in achieving a Covid Recovery grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (over £40k), which has made an important financial contribution to ensuring the Abbey's continued viability. This is especially important as income from visitors has dropped substantially. The grant will also pay for some additions, such as contactless donation points.
- Selby Abbey has been awarded a Trip Advisor Travellers Choice award, which means it is in the top 10% internationally. This is hugely significant.
- The Tourism Development Officer continues to work closely with individual VE businesses to help them achieve Covid-secure opening. A contact list of over 100 visitor economy businesses is regularly kept up to date with relevant news and advice. Individual enquiries from over 20 businesses have been received and actioned since the beginning of April.
- We have a new area manager at Welcome to Yorkshire (recently restructured) and have agreed our Strategic Support Agreement for this year. WtY are including the themes from our niche trails in their marketing for the region – Heritage, Nature & Wildlife and Family Adventure.
- 'We're Good to Go' industry standard – over 25 businesses in the Selby District have achieved the mark/green tick. VisitBritain have developed an interactive map showcasing all of the businesses with the Covid-19 secure industry standard, available on their website.

## **Selby 950**

- Headline results for the impact of the year long programme include: 20,000 spectators with 1300 local direct participants. An economic impact return of £348,000. An infographic is attached and the details will be presented to Scrutiny in November. A great success for the town.
- The programme has been recognised as a Finalist in the White Rose Awards (Arts & Culture category). The award ceremony is in November (date yet to be announced)
- The Audience Development Plan for the District is complete and is already being used to ensure the Community Engagement Plan for the HSHAZ engages our target audiences. Key audiences for development are older people, young people (especially teenagers), families living in our more disadvantaged wards and people with disabilities.
- The Selby Treasures Online museum is live and accessible on SDC's website and a comms campaign has been delivered to publicise this.

## **Cultural Development Framework**

- Beam have completed the first phase of the consultation programme.
- Initial delivery areas are:
  - Place-making & authenticity (recognising the rich & multi-layered identity of Selby District)
  - Opportunities created by Covid, which has placed a new value on “local”
  - Developing the cultural & creative sectors, especially networking and up-skilling to ensure the sector can make a meaningful contribution to inclusive, growth/regeneration, as well as providing adequate creative workspace in the District
  - Pop-up/meanwhile use of buildings to increase the vibrancy of our town centres
  - Projects which engage young people and increase their aspirations
  - Creation of a central repository for heritage (not necessarily a building) which will ensure that voices and stories are not lost (e.g ship-building)
  - Work in the public realm, including an events programme which is both hyper-local and grander in scale
- The Arts Council have re-opened their project grant funds, so we will shortly be applying for support to develop a large-scale project for enhancing Barlby Road, as an important gateway to Selby.

### **Strategic Health**

- Supporting local Primary Care Networks to plan for the seasonal flu campaign. Considering whether council assets can be used to support walk-in clinic capacity across district. To be confirmed. Mass flu vaccination is being discussed at the Local Resilience Forum level. Priority for vaccination likely to be: most vulnerable, Yr 7 pupils, Shield Patient List Households, Health & social Care staff, care support staff, 50-60+yrs (all dependent on vaccine availability).
- Liaison with CCG, Primary Care Networks, NYCC and Two Ridings Community Foundation to consider a Lottery bid for a community leaders programme with the health and community sectors to strengthen the capacity of the community sector to deliver health based initiatives.
- Awaiting needs assessment data from the CCG to develop the next Selby Health Matters plan on wider determinants of health.
- As schools resume, work on the Healthy Schools Zone will recommence including a park and stride initiative looking at 2-3 local drop off points as well as a food growing project supported by £8k Healthy Living Concept Fund across Selby High and 3 cluster primary schools in Selby town.

### **Disabled Facilities Grant post lockdown:**

- The Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) is a mandatory means tested Grant and a statutory requirement of every strategic housing authority. A DFG is available to people who own their own home (including caravans and river boats), private tenants and tenants of social landlords to enable them to live well and independently for as long as possible in their own home. Unfortunately, DFG is NOT available to council tenants. Adaptations to Council properties have to be funded via the HRA.
- During lockdown all work that could be progressed was. This enabled the team to approve (ready for the contract to get on site) a significant number of adaptations, currently 36 are awaiting the contractor to confirm a start date.
- Since the end of lockdown contractors managed to get back on site during June and have now completed 10 adaptations. Each adaptation is unique and some require significant more work than others. On average we have 3 contractors on site at any one time.

### **Capital programme**

Following the easing of Government restrictions the Council have been able to re-engage our major works partners on delivery of our HRA Capital Investment Programme. Whilst this is obviously positive news, it is important to note that the significant period of national shutdown will still impact what can be achieved in the current year. Securing appropriate labour resources and certain materials is still proving challenging in some instances as manufacturers and contractors seek to catch up with their own respective backlogs.

Notwithstanding however, as a result of our commitment to increasing investment in our housing portfolio, as detailed in the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan, customers will begin to see substantial improvements to their homes in the coming months and years.

As highlighted, we are currently working with our contract partners to finalise this year's delivery programme and whilst achieving everything we had originally planned will prove challenging, we are confident we will still deliver significant financial investment including:

- Repointing of 190 properties
- Up to 110 bathroom and/or wet room replacements
- Up to 107 kitchen replacements
- Up to 240 properties being rewired – subject to findings of individual tests
- 50 properties receiving new windows, and;
- Up to 203 homes receiving new doors

In total, the above programmes equate to circa £4million pounds worth of investment in our homes.

### **Housing and Homelessness**

At the end of March, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government advised all Local Authorities that there they should provide emergency shelter to any person in need of accommodation. Anyone who presented as homeless to our Housing Options Team and had no access to a safe place to stay was provided with emergency bed and breakfast. Between 23<sup>rd</sup> March and 31<sup>st</sup> August, we provided 31 households with emergency accommodation which was a 72% increase in placements compared to the same period in 2019. The team worked closely with partner agencies to ensure that

anyone accommodated had access to food and any medical supplies they needed and once restrictions were lifted we supported them into longer term accommodation.

We have continued to advertise and allocate our properties through North Yorkshire Home Choice and we have now recommenced viewings and sign-ups. We have also been continuously supporting our communities in dealing with cases of antisocial behaviour but with the temporary closure of courts and changes to the law around evictions, cases have had to be managed very differently. During lockdown, we were not able to support victims face-to-face as we normally would, and Enforcement Officers developed new working processes to continue to deliver support in partnership with the Police and other agencies. We have now started to reintroduce more services and are carrying out pre-planned visits.

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